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(SNP055) Louis C. Grannis interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Peggy C. Bradley

Louis C. Grannis

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mr. Louis C. Grannis
INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Dorothy Smith
PLACE: Sawmiller
DATE: May 2, 1977

TRANSCRIBED BY:

Peggy C. Bradley

COMPLETED DATE:

February 15, 1983

D.S.: Your father bought the acres? Is that right?

L.G.: No, he bought the timber.

D.S.: You bought the timber?

L.G.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Uh, I bought a map along, and I was wondering if you could show me.. (unfolding the map). I hope I am pushing the right buttons. Alright now, on this map, I was wondering if you could show me approximately where the sawmill was?

L.G.: Well, let see. Where is Browntown?

D.S.: Browntown is, here, Browntown.

L.G.: Now, where is Flint Hill?

D.S.: I don't know.

L.G.: Here is

D.S.: Oh, here is Flint Hill. Here is Jenkin's Gap.

L.G.:

D.S.: Well, this, see this. Now this is the park entrance up here. This is looking toward the piedmont and this is looking toward

L.G.: Browntown.

D.S.: Browntown is here.

L.G.: Ran from here down this way.

D.S.: Ah, I see.

L.G.: Down on both sides of the mountain. Uhhuh. From where the CCC Camp was, this side of Panorama.

D.S.: Oh! That was a long area.

L.G.: That was 6600 acres. Sixty-six thousand and forty-three acres and three quarters.

D.S.: Did you own all of that?

L.G.: We bought the timber.

D.S.: You bought the timber.

L.G.: That's right. Paid ten dollars a acre.

D.S.: I see now, various people owned this land. Was that it?

L.G.: *Just* one man John J. Miller.

D.S.: John J. Miller owned it?

L.G.: He lived in Little Washington.

D.S.: Oh, I see. So he, for ten dollars an acre allowed you to timber off his land. O.K., that makes sense. What did you do with the wood after you had cut it? Did you save the bark?

L.G.: Well, that's just it, we didn't get to cut very much. Probably close to a thousand railroad ties, which we hauled to Bentonville.

D.S.: How did you haul them?

L.G.: With a tractor trailer.

D.S.: Oh, Uhhuh.

L.G.: Sold to the Southern Railroad, all. We had a contract with them.

D.S.: So, I see, Southern Railroad. And that was all you did with the timber, cut the railroad ties? That's all you did?

L.G.: No, we had a small mill in there. We shipped the mill, .. we went up *from Bentonville to* New York, and bought a mill, a small one. We shipped it down to Bentonville by train, and hauled it up on the mountain and set it up.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Cut the timber to build a big mill near Little Washington at the foot of the Devil Stairs.

D.S.: Little Devil Stairs, or Big Devil?

L.G.: I don't know, one of them.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Those are ~~step~~ Ugh! Oh, yes, and that's where you put your sawmill, the big one?

L.G.: That's where we intended to put it. But that was a ~~big~~ ^{BAND} mill and the one we had up on the mountain was my Dad's, called "Sandy's Mill", the little one.

D.S.: Was that a up and down or a circular?

L.G.: That was a circular?

D.S.: Circular.

L.G.: The one that we was going to build in Little Washington was a band one and we had this little mill up on the mountain here right at the scrub end of the timber and we built road slides. So, instead of cutting the timber, when we got the big mill up, we'd slide it into the big mill and then cut it up. And, we had, I guess, approximately two or three miles of log slides built, and while we was doing that we were cutting out railroad ties on the little mill. We was also, we had some log cutters in there cutting chestnut trees, the blite had killed, and I guess we shipped out three or four hundred telephone poles.

D.S.: Oh, railroad ties and telephone poles. You didn't do any for construction of homes?

L.G.: Well, we had a boarding house up there. We worked about thirty men and we had about eight to ten horses, and

D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: And, we had the boarding house, two stories there and we had a place to sleep on the second floor.

D.S.: Where was that, near the mill?

L.G.: That was right at the mill.

D.S.: Oh.

L.G.: And, we had another building the cook and his wife occupied, and another one that was an office and living quarters for me. Those ~~are~~ ^{were all} torn down by the CCC boys.

D.S.: Yes. This boarding house, would people come from Front Royal and Winchester to stay there?

L.G.: No, only the people ^{that} worked for us.

D.S.: Oh.

L.G.: We had five or six people from over in Fauquier County and a couple from Rappahannock and maybe eight or ten from Browntown. And, our boss was a fellow named, Oscar Beech, was from Albine.

D.S.: From where? Albany?

L.G.: Aldine in Fauquier.

D.S.: Oh, yes O.K.

L.G.: And his brother and his wife was the cooks up there.

D.S.: Did you go, yourself, to supervise the tree cutting?

L.G.: I stayed up there.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Uh, see, we .. we lived in Baltimore then, and Dad would have business in Baltimore and he had me ~~then~~ ^{there} to look after things why he was gone. When he was there, of course, he was boss.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Were there any neighbors...any other people that lived there.

L.G.: The closest one was a fellow named Burke, that lived approximately a mile from the camp in an old house that was sitting in a field above the mill. We were located on the fire road, that is now. And

D.S.: Oh.

L.G.: You would go around that road. Isn't that Jenkin's Gap where you come up from Browntown?

D.S.: Right.

L.G.: Alright. Right above the Gap is a fire road that runs around ^{the} side, the Rappahannock side.

D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: Around a orchard that is out there.....trees is still there.....a big field which is entirely grown up.

D.S.: Everything is grown up now. Was that field used for farming of any kind.

L.G.: No, they called it the "Duke" field, but Mr. Miller who owned the land had a herd of cattle that roamed up there.

D.S.: Oh yes. Uhhuh.

L.G.: And, this fellow Burke, he of course, went back and forth to work from his house. He and his wife, he had a couple of children, I think, lived up there. And, then the closest one other than that was a family named, Tom Riley at the foot of the mountain on the Rappahannock side.

D.S.: Uh, did you all get together much?

L.G.: We were working.

D.S.: Yes, Uhhuh. Now this Burke, you said he went to work.

Where did he work?

L.G.: Worked in the mill.

D.S.: Oh! In your mill?

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: Oh, that was handy.

L.G.: He wouldn't

(The clock started chimning)

D.S.: He wouldn't have what?

L.G.: Wait till that thing cut off.

D.S.: Oh. (Laughed)

L.G.: He wouldn't have been up there if he hadn't been working
at the mill, because it wasn't anything on that mountain.

D.S.: Right.

L.G.: A lot of trees.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yes.

L.G.: But

D.S.: When you ~~was~~ ^{were} finally moved out, was.....how many.....,
was there any wildlife left?

L.G.: Rabbits, a few bobcats,

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Quails, that's about all.

D.S.: No deer?

L.G.: Well, if there were we never saw them, they never came up.

D.S.: No bear?

L.G.: No, we saw no bears. We use to have a bobcat that would
come down the log slide and wake us up about two o'clock
every morning once in a while.

D.S.: How did he wake you up, screaming?

L.G.: Screaming?

D.S.: Yes. Did they like to go down the slide?

L.G.: (Laughed) They didn't slide down, but we would see his tracks and we would hear him. A couple of us would go after him with our guns.....he would disappear before we got to him.

D.S.: (Laughed) So you did no farming of any kind?

L.G.: No farming.....no.

D.S.: What did you do for relaxation?

L.G.: Well, I use to come down ^{to} Front Royal after I had been there for awhile, sometimes I would stay over at the hotel in Flint Hill.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And, that's about all the relaxation we had.

D.S.: None of your neighbors got together and had parties?

L.G.: There wasn't any neighbors.

D.S.: Well, I was thinking of?

L.G.: The ones just worked at the mills.

D.S.: Yea..Uhhuh..Yea. Did Tom Riley work for the mill?

L.G.: No.

D.S.: No...No.

L.G.: See, it, there was no road up from the Rappahannock side. If you wanted to get up there in a car, you would have to go to Browntown and come up past Milt Manor's house and up over the mountain and on around to the mill.

D.S.: Yes. Ah, I was going to ask you a question that was in there. You started to answer before. You would take the apples, right, down to Browntown?

L.G.: Well, Mr. Miller told us we could have all the apples we wanted. So, if we had horse, we had a team of horses and a wagon available for it, Uh, we loaded it up with apples from the orchard and hauled it down to Browntown. Up to one of his stills and he would run apple brandy for us.

D.S.: Good stuff.

L.G.: And ... Right, it's good stuff. Fifty-fifty...ⁱⁿ other words if we got ten gallons we got five.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Never managed to get enough to fill our keg. We had to pay him a little extra for that.

D.S.: (laughed) You had to take his word on that, is that it?
Yea, Uhhuh.

L.G.: Yes. Then the first chance we got going to Baltimore we take it and put it in the back of the car and take it to the *city*

D.S.: Did you sell it, or?

L.G.: Oh, no!

D.S.: (laughed) No..enjoyed it. How much would you get for your railroad ties?

L.G.: Ah, at the time.....see railroad ties are numbered: No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5 was 7x9.. 8½feet long.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And the oak ties we would get about \$9.00 for.

D.S.: A piece? (whistled) That was good money.

L.G.: Back in those days it was pretty good. But, going into the woods, cutting them into ties and hauling it eleven miles to the railroad, you had to have that much or you didn't come out.

D.S.: Right, yes.

L.G.: The smaller ties were less, and if you cut switch ties, which generally runs twenty-one feet of oak we'd get a pretty price for those.

D.S.: Yes. And-ah, the telephone poles, how much would you get for those?

L.G.: (Laughed) I forgot. I couldn't even come close.... probably about eighteen or twenty dollars. If they were straight enough you didn't need a blueprint to climb them. The chestnut tree no longer available, they didn't ^{all} grow ~~all~~ streight.

D.S.: No. No.

L.G.: They were pretty good for the fellow cutting them because the bark, we didn't cut any that all the bark was off of them. Because the blite. If it was half on it and half dead, we would cut it and skin the live bark from the live side. That way you only had to skin one side of it.


D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: Sold those to the telephone company.

D.S.: And you didn't save that bark for any of the tanners.

L.G.: There wasn't any tanneries, that was before we come down here.

D.S.: I see.

L.G.:  Tan bark, but, the tan bark was chestnut oak, red oak. And, ah, we saw a lot of trees cut and the bark all skinned off of it and the tree laying there.

D.S.: That's right..terrible..Yea. Such a waste wasn't it? A terrible waste. What did you use the eight or ten horses for?

L.G.: Hauling logs, riding, sometimes we would ride up through the woods, sometimes we walked. Two or three riding horses. And, a four team was work horses. Then we had a big Belgium horse that we used for the slide, we also had another singel horse we would use. We'd put a roll ... five or six logs into the slide and put a hook in the rear end of it and hook it to the horse and he'd bring it on into the mill. In wet weather, most of the time, the log slide was wet, we had a grade ^{up} there we would roll them over in it and give them a push and they would slide into the mill by themselves. We also picked up oil or grease, wasted grease from the service stations, and paint slides with it when it was dry weather.

D.S.: How long did you say that slide was? Three miles.

L.G.: Well, no. It was three, somewhere three or four miles altogether, but there were three slides one coming from this direction, and one went down from the mill down to the Rappahannock side.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: There was the road down at the foot, but no road coming up.

D.S.: Right. It must have been hard work for the horses coming back up the mountain.

L.G.: Well, they, no we didn't use them to come up at the steep part, up there where we was at. We were, ah, up near the top. We were, I guess, the mill was a quarter of a mile, from where the highway is now on Skyline Drive. There is a look-out up there that looks ^{down} out over Flint Hill, half way down the field where this fellow Burke house was and

And about a quarter of a mile from his house then, right on down right at the edge of the wood we had one well that furnished water for the mill and everything.

D.S.: That is one thing I meant to ask you, the mill, how was it powered, by water?

L.G.: By steam.

D.S.: Uhhuh, both mills were?

L.G.: Well, we only had one. We never got to the big mill, going.

D.S.: The band mill, you never got going. That's too bad.

L.G.: The State came along and cut us off. They told us not to cut another stick. It wasn't too bad because we hadn't cut down anything but in the scrub tract.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: But, you go up there now you hear Rangers talking to the flatland tourist about millions of feet of virgin timber on that mountain, and yet, when the State come along, they had a man named Stoneburner, from up there in Shenandoah County.

D.S.: Right.

L.G.: Come up there and cruise the timber. They wanted to know how much timber. All we put in for was what we had into it. But the State, uh, finally granted us three thousand eight hundred dollars, for what we put sixty-six thousand and thirty-five thousand into and it cost us ten thousand dollars for lawyers and court fees to get the three thousand eight hundred dollars.

D.S.: Why did they grant you such a small amount? Now, they was suppose to give real reasons for this.

L.G.: Well, they tell me they only had eighty-nine thousand dollars to pay for all the land and everything in Warren and Rappahannock County combined. And, of course, along them was still the Civil War feeling and we were not from the South, we were from the ~~North~~ ^{Yankee}, and they wasn't about to give a damn Yankee anything they didn't have to.

D.S.: What brought you down here?

L.G.: What brought me down here was Dad came down and bought this timber.

D.S.: Huh.

L.G.: And, talked me into coming. I was a private detective in those days, in Baltimore. But I had been with him everywhere he'd been but San Domingo, I didn't go there. He had a mill in Tennessee, had one in Florida, had one in South Carolina
~~g~~

D.S.: Sawmills?

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: So, you really knew how to run one didn't you?

L.G.: Well, I was real young then.

D.S.: How old ~~was~~ ^{were} you?

L.G.: I was twenty years old when I came down here.

D.S.: Really?

L.G.: That was in 1922, I was born in 1900. I hadn't had the experience in logging and sawmilling that he had. He was the one that done that, I just did what he asked me too, at best. I took care of the payroll and bought the supplies.

D.S.: How much did you pay, since you did payroll. How much did you pay these thirty men?

L.G.: Well, a good man get three and a half a day, and his board.

D.S.: And his board?

L.G.: Which was about a dollar and a half or two dollars ^{more than} ~~which~~
they were getting locally here.

D.S.: Right.

L.G.: We had good men or we wouldn't keep them, if they weren't good. We had good log cutters and had pretty good sawmill men.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: The men that, Uh, that fed the boiler and kept the steam up, he got two and a half a day. The man that did the sawing got four ^{1/2} dollars a day.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And their board.

D.S.: Right. How did they keep the boiler going? With wood?

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: Ah, You said you didn't do any cutting of wood for houses or anything of that kind.

L.G.: No.

D.S.: Wasn't there a demand for that too?

L.G.: Not then.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Uh, then we got over to the big mill, that's where we'd started cutting boards. But all, but all the boards that we cut we used for our own houses.

D.S.: Uhhuh, oh yea, right. But your sawmill was equipped so you could have cut boards for houses?

L.G.: Well, yes, it was right expensive because it was a small mill.

D.S.: Uhhuh. When you say small mill ... I don't know what a mill is.

L.G.: A small mill is a man doing the sawing and the setting too. So, when you roll a log onto the carriage you dog it with two spikes, in one hand , in each hand to hold it. Well, he had a man on the log deck, and the sawer took care of one of the hooks. The man that rolled the log on from the log deck took care of the other one, and the man who was sawing had an extension arm to come over where he could reach it and he, he set it for the right thickness for whatever he was cutting. And, he dogged one end of it and the fellow on the log deck would dog the other end.

D.S.: O.K. So, you get a tree and you chop a tree

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: And, you take the bark off of it, if it was any on it?

L.G.: No.

D.S.: You leave it on.....?

L.G.: Leave it on.

D.S.: Oh!

L.G.: Cut it off in slabs, square up around the tree in area, so, you cut a slab off and up put that up against it.

D.S.: Yes, Uhhuh. I should think it would have been just as easy to use some of those pieces ^{for} shingles, and something of that kind.

L.G.: Well, we cut it up into slabs, about three feet long and sent it to the boiler room.

D.S.: (Laughed) Well, that was making good use of it. Sure, Yea.

L.G.: See, when you cut a slab off you was squaring the log up.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And then we had a cut off saw. That the slab would come off the tearing saw on rollers and roll down to the cut off saw and cut it off in pieces .. that long.

D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: No, only that the fireman would fire the boiler with them.

D.S.: Ah, to get a thousand railroad ties you said you had made, roughly, how many trees would that have been?

L.G.: About a third -- four or five hundred, or something like that, trees.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Good big trees?

L.G.: Not big ones, they were little ones. Wasn't any big timber to mount to much. See, some white oak pretty good size. Pretty good size ~~maples~~ ^{chestnuts}, and we would either cut a piece out and lay it aside to build the big mill with, or cut it into a switch tie....

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Switche tie is seven by nine inches by twenty-one feet long.

D.S.: Did you have any contact with, Ah, with Mr. Pollack?

L.G.: (Laughed) I'd met him a couple of times, once up where we was, once or twice up where he lived ... above Luray.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you like him?

L.G.: (Coughing) He was a wonderful feller.

D.S.: Uh.

L.G.: He always had three or four coats on and he had his pockets loaded with everything that they would hold. Maps, letters, and a little bit of everything.

D.S.: He did a lot of good for the mountain people that lived around in that area, didn't he?

L.G.: Yes. Well, you see, he owned Skyland up there.

D.S.: That's right.

L.G.: And he got acquainted with lots of them people because he stayed there. A lot of people worked for him. And, a lot them furnished things that, because where he was at that time, the only way to get to his place was by horseback. You couldn't get up there by car.

D.S.: Yes. Did you ever ride over there on horseback?

L.G.: No, never went over there on horseback.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Ah, you see, Skyland was about fourteen miles from Panorama.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: ... and we were about twenty, twenty-seven miles ^{away} The furthest I ever rode horseback was Bentonville. I use to go down Browntown and on over to Bentonville.

D.S.: Was there a good trail down there?

L.G.: Oh, we had a road going that way.

D.S.: Oh, you *did*.

L.G.: Yes, we took a six wheel truck up there, hauled ties and poles off of it.

D.S.: That's right, you said you did. Did you build that road?

L.G.: We rebuilt it.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: But it was so steep ... you went up fifteen hundred feet in less than a mile. And, it was so steep that the breakage in it that a , named Cornwell, not a *farmer* a Sauer, an old timey automobile, and everything he went

over one of those breakers it would open all four doors on his car, he would have to stop and close it.

D.S.: (Laughing)

L.G.: I know the breaks broke loose on a truck full of ties one day, the guy had to run it into the bank to stop it. (Laughed)

D.S.: Shu-u-u... That must have been a wild feeling. Dear! Where did you get the food to feed these people that you had working for you?

L.G.: We had it shipped in, we bought from wholesaler and we also bought locally. Meat and things from the butchers here in Front Royal. And-a, we had some stuff shipped in by freight.

D.S.: Then you had to take it up the laborious road, right?

L.G.: Well, we would take it to Browntown and up from there.

D.S.: Yea..that's what I mean, up that rough road.

How long would it take you to get to Browntown?

L.G.: In a car? Ah, let's see.... we were about eight miles ~~either~~, *no it wasn't eight miles* ~~two, three, seven, six,~~ around seven miles to Browntown.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: By the road. *and by* and horseback it took a little longer.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: I rode a little western horse most of the time, and I always had a lot of respect for dumb animals. Most of the time I walked down the steep part and let the horse come along behind me, and when we went back I walked up and pushed the horse ahead of me.

D.S.: (Laughed) That was very nice, very gentle of you.

L.G.: Unless she misbehaved and I was mad at her, then I would let her run up there.

D.S.: Oh! Do you think if you had been allowed to continue in business that you would have eventually run out of trees?

L.G.: Ah, probably in nine or ten years, yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: When we got the big mill going, we could had cut the timber then.

D.S.: That's right. So you would have been self-destructed in about ten years?

L.G.: We would have run out, yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: We had started at one end and we were going right through to the other end.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yes.

L.G.: But we cut timber out of a mountain in Tennessee, Ah, in a harder place than that to get to and worse timber we had. And, we didn't do so bad.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: In South Carolina we cut a lot of Cypress out of a swamp near Florence. And, in Florida we built a band mill down there we cut long Yellow Pines.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yea.

L.G.: We sure left a lot of bare land down there. (Laughed)
We built a railroad ten miles from Venice, down to where we was.

D.S. Uhhuh

L.G.: We had steam skitters that we cut a tree and we hooked a cable to it, one of those tall tree.....snake it to a road and load it onto the railroad that carried it to the mill. We had a log crop there.

D.S.: Did you like our mountain?

L.G.: Oh, I like all kind of mountains.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: See I lived in the mountain in Tennessee, Uh, not in the mountain in New York State, but we had some pretty good size hills up there. But, see, I was only four years old when we left New York.

D.S.: Where were you from in New York State?

L.G.: Oh, a little place called Falcon, right somewhere near Jamestown.

D.S.: Oh, yes.

L.G.: That's where we would see a ball game.

D.S.: (Laughed) I wouldn't tell that against you. (Laughed)

L.G.: _____ Jamestown.

D.S.: Well, you know, what I was wondering? What did these men do for their relaxation? These fellows that worked for you, did they play violions or anything?

L.G.: No, they played cards, they sat around and told a lot of *tales*.

D.S.: No music of any kind?

L.G.: I don't know of any music we had while we were up there. But, we probably would if we had stayed there long enough.

D.S.: Right, because the ^{*Jeus*} ~~juice~~ harp was very popular.

L.G.: Well, the.... see, we didn't have mountain people that worked for us. The mountain people they don't like to work. We had.... a ... four or five from Browntown, a sawer came from Warrenton, a blacksmith came from Fauquier County.

D.S.: Oh, you did your own balcksmithing there too?

L.G.: We had too.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: The horses walking around those rocks. The wood boss and his brother came from Aldie

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And we had two or three people from Humes and Royston that worked out there then. We had one fellow that drifted in down here someplace and I don't know how he got up there, but he was from Scotland. He was with us too.

D.S.: (Laughed)

L.G.: We shut down in the winter time.

D.S.: Oh.

L.G.: Because it was so cold and snow and everything. We had snows back in those days.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: This Scotland's name was Stone. He was an artist..., one of these fellows that bummed around all over the world. He worked with us up there for two years. He and I would keep ⁱⁿ a cabin in the winter time when we would shut down. We would get up in the morning we would play a game of cribbage to see who would go out and water the horses. When we come back we would play another game of cribbage to see who would get breakfast.

D.S.: (Laughed)

L.G.: Then we would play another hand of cribbage to see who would wash dishes.

D.S.: (Laughed) That was a fair way to do it.

L.G.: Then we played another hand to see who went after the mail.

D.S.: Oh. Where, how did you get your mail?

L.G.: Well, we got it at Browntown and we got it from Flint Hill. We would alternate.

D.S.: Uhhuh

L.G.: We had mail coming to both palces. We'd go horseback down to get the mail.

D.S.: I pity those horses going down that icy road in the winter.

L.G.: Well, they got along alright.

D.S.: Sure, they did. Yea. Uhhuh. You probably had special shoes for them in the winter, didn't you?

L.G.: No.

D.S.: No, huh.

L.G.: We had about a foot of snow up there in the winter time and then had a fine frozen rain on top of it. It formed a crust about an inch thick.

D.S.: Like we had this past winter?

L.G.: Well, we didn't have anything this past winter like that. UH, that, the ice was about a foot off the ground. When you start down, you sit down and start slidding and if you didn't hit... slide into a tree or get up against your foot to stop you, you (He stomped) your foot into the ice to stop you.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: I think I've got some pictures here.

D.S.: Oh, wonderful. Maybe it will give some of *background*
Now, you was saying this was the horse you use to ride
most of the time? Or is it this one?

L.G.: No, this one.

D.S.: There are the dead chestnuts.

L.G.: This one is *—* a hunter here.

D.S.: Yea, yea.

L.G.: This was about half way from the mill to the top.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: See, the tree, the good size one had been cut out here.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: See, I am sitting on a stump here on one of them.

D.S.: That's a good size tree you are sitting on. Yea.

L.G.: That was taken in the field up there.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh.

L.G.: So was this we had some visitors one day up there.
They rode horseback up there. I come down off the mountain
in a Thunder Storm one day and (Laughed), I don't know
how many trees were hit by lightning in sight *that sure* ~~distant.~~

D.S.: Shu.....Yea.

L.G.: I was riding this horse.....

D.S.: Yea.....Uhhuh.

L.G.: And leading this one.

D.S.: Oh Boy!

L.G.: Going right down through *the woods* it. You see how bare this is?

D.S.: Yes, yes.

L.G.: This was that fire road that come down there. This is one
of our teamster from West Virginia.

D.S.: Those are great horses. What breed of horses were they?

L.G.: Uh. They were Uh, I can't think See if it is written there.

D.S.: Just says the mares.

L.G.: We bought this team of horses in Strasburg.

D.S.: Uhhuh

L.G.: We had another team we bought in, between Strasburg and Middletown. This was my horse, the little horse. She was a jumper. She would jump over a log, but she couldn't jump much higher.

D.S.: (Laughed) She had to learn didn't she? Ah.

L.G.: Now that's my house. That's the office and that's where I lived.

D.S.: Uhhuh..

L.G.: This was the boarding house.

D.S.: Ah.

L.G.: This was the log deck, and here's the truck we used.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Twenty-five oak ties.

L.G.: Oh, that was.....where they piled the slabs up to burn them.

D.S.: Oh, I see.

L.G.: See that horse was bringing seven or eight logs down the slide.

D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: The slide come down this way and come down this way. Here is the log deck.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: That's a twenty-one foot white oak log in it. Here is another one behind it.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: And we piled the ties out on a deck here and then loaded them off on wagons mostly. Used wagons to haul them more than we did the truck.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. My, that ~~thick~~^{takes} a strong horse to pull that doesn't it? Oh, is this, let's see you say this is the mill?

L.G.: Yes. There the mill, there.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: See here is the boiler, ... smoke stack. Here is where we piled the ties after we cut them to load them *on the wagon.*

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: And this is the runway we used to dump the slabs.

~~D.S.:~~

L.G.: The sawmill sawdust came out on a belt and went over on the *side* .

D.S.: Uh, another picture of the mill.

L.G.: That's the boarding house.

D.S.: The well was right over close to it. That's handy, yes.

L.G.: Here's some ties piled up. That's Oscar Jenkins, he was from Browntown, he fired the boiler. This here is the carriage.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Now the people down here thought we was going to use this mill to cut all our logs on. And that's the smallest mill I ever knew my dad had anything to do with at all.

D.S.: (Laughed)

L.G.: He started apoligizing as soon as I saw it.

D.S.: (Laughed)

L.G.: Because he operated pretty big outfits.

D.S.: Yea. Where, Now you say lumber and ties piles and stables.
Was this the stables?

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Yes, that's the stable, and we had a blacksmith shop.

D.S.: That's a good picture of the mill, isn't it? And so is
that. Oh, too bad all of these are fasten in, I was going
to ask you if I could borrow one to have redone by the park.

L.G.: She helped to cook...we got her out of Baltimore.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Betsy.

D.S.: You don't mind?

L.G.: No.

Mrs. G.: I din't know him then.

D.S.: She looks cute. (Laughing)

L.G.: This is our wood boss, he is holding a couple of king snakes,
that was taken in South Carolina.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: You didn't have as good a camera in those days as you do now.

D.S.: Here with your pussy cat.

L.G.: And my wife.

D.S.: Uhhuh. ~~you~~ finally met.

L.G.: Where she lives in Front Royal.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Well, these are wonderful pictures. You wouldn't
happen to have negatives?

L.G.: (Laughed) No, if I did have, they wouldn't be any good.

D.S.: Because they show the scene there so much more graphic than pointing at a map and saying there they were.

Mrs. G.: It has been.... been almost ~~sixty~~^{thirty}-five years.

D.S.: That's right. Yea, that's a long time. Well, I think that you truly given a very clear picture of this. One thing I was wondering..... The park was actually started, it became park in 1935.

L.G.: Right.

D.S.: Now, in 1923, you ~~was~~^{were} told not to cut any more wood.

L.G.: In 1920--24.

D.S.: 24. That was jumping the gun a little bit wasn't it?

L.G.: Well, Uh, the way I understood it, the Wasn't Ickes the Secretary of the Interior then?

D.S.: Yes. Uhhuh...Right.

L.G.: He told the state of Virginia, you get clear title to all the land, turn it over to the Federal Government, we'll put the park here. As soon as he told them that, they told everybody that had any activity in that land at all; except the moonshiners, they didn't run them out until after they put the park in.

D.S.: So anybody that was about to do anything ^{that} would destroy or spoil was told to stop.

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: I get it. Then in 1924 all such activity was stopped.

L.G.: Right.

D.S.: Even the sawmills that were down in the bottom.

L.G.: There were none in the bottom as far as we knew.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: Not in this end anyway.

D.S.: No, they were more in the central and southern end.

L.G.: Southern end.

D.S.: Yes, right. Did you ever run into Aaron Nicholson?

L.G.: Not that I remember.

D.S.: You'd remembered! (Laughed) From the stories I had heard.

L.G.: Mr. Pollock, wasn't a *manshiner*
or mountain man.

D.S.: No, No. But..., Well, you know, can you think of anything else you can tell me that can go down into the history of the park.

L.G.: No.

D.S.: Do you wish you was back there?

L.G.: I wish they would have left us alone.

D.S.: Yes, Ah,

L.G.: Several of the people of the people that lived around Flint Hill and Browntown remarked, even a couple *on* Front Royal, that we were just a couple of nuts to come down here and think we could get that timber off of that mountain and make it pay. Like I say, we were in Tennessee for four years and we got worst timber than this off a harder place *to get it.*

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: ~~.....to get to~~

D.S.: Right.

L.G.:and we came out alright on it.

D.S.: Uhhuh, Yep.

L.G.: When we left Tennessee, we went back to Baltimore, then went to work for First *Royal* Lumber Company there for awhile. Then we got in with a couple lumbermen that had some box-wood in San Domingo

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.:And they talked him into going down there cutting that off.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: What do you think they wanted to make with it? Roller Skating wheels.

D.S.: Shu-u (laughed)

L.G.: Good professional roller skates have boxwood wheels.

D.S.: Yea.

L.G.: Very hard to get.

D.S.: Yes. Did you ever have any thoughts of reforestation, of you know planting other trees. No? And the ~~man~~ that you purchased the rights from made no such request?

L.G.: No.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: That would be a hard place to plant a tree up there to grow. ~~In~~...

D.S.: They are growing.

L.G.: I know they are growing, in between the rocks.

D.S.: (laughed) Yea.

L.G.: There's a lot of good timber up there now.

D.S.: There is. It has, as Darwin Lambert said, "Nature has been restored." It has, it really has, it has been beautiful.

L.G.: All that chestnut oak that there been cut off in the 1800s ... that is growing up.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: But mountain timber, if it gets any size gets wind shape. Puts cracks all through it. Cutting out in boards, it don't amount to much, for ties.

D.S.: Uhhuh...Yes.

L.G.: But, that the only trees that are fit to use are seventy-five years old. They are that old before they start getting wind shaken.

D.S.: Wind skater, You call it?

L.G.: Wind shaken.

D.S.: Wind shaken, Oh, shaken. Oh shaken, sure.

L.G.: It well eventually put a crack in the tree. It don't hurt the tree any, far as growing is concern.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: It blows far enough over one way and come back, it will eventually work a crack in it.

(Clock Chimes)

D.S.: Yes. Now how did you say you get here? You say you come from Manassas to

L.G.: You go from Baltimore to Manassas...

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: Or to Washington to Manassas. Manassas we come across to The Plains. From The Plains you come across to Marshall, and from Marshall to White Post and White Post to Double Toll Gate, take a left turn there. We could see Mount Marshall from White Post, I mean from the Double Toll Gates.

D.S.: Why is it called the Double Toll Gate?

L.G.: Well, it is across a road and I imagine they had a toll gate on each road.

D.S.: Oh.

L.G.: That is ten miles out.

MRS. G.: Ten miles out on Winchester road.

D.S.: Really.

L.G.: Well, 340 turns right at White Post.

D.S.: Huh.

L.G.: It use to take us twenty minutes to go. How far is it from White Post to Double Toll Gate?

MRS. G.: Oh. White Post--five miles.

L.G.: Well, about three. It would take twenty minutes, you would bump over those wedges in the road. They finally smoothed it up a little bit.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: But, the Double Toll Gate here was a dirt road and every road out of here in 1922 was dirt road with the exception Browntown road, between here and Browntown. They had a single tract of road between Front Royal and Browntown and that was paved.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: All the rest of the road was not. We went to Luray from Flint Hill one day. I went over there with a feller that was staying at the Richard's Hotel and that was a dirt road too, Little Washington to Sperryville. Sperryville up over the mountain. We went across where Panorama is.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

L.G.: We had to stop half way up, there was a stream of water coming out the side of the hill there, stopped there and filled the radiator up and let the motor cool off. We had to go up in low gear from Sperryville all the way to the top of the mountain.

D.S.: Was there a toll gate there still at the time, below Panorama. We are trying to locate the time the toll gate was taken up?

L.G.: No. There was a toll gate between Luray and New Market.

D.S.: Yes.

L.G.: Near the top of the mountain.

D.S.: Yes.

D.S.: There had been a toll gate about a mile below where Panorama is now, and....

L.G.: Wasn't there the day I went over.

D.S.: Yes, Uhhuh. That was in '23.

L.G.: Yes.

D.S.: Well, O.K., probably that in 22 that was taken down. We have been trying to establish that date too, but noone can remember.